

CHAPTER 189

NATIONAL METRIC CONVERSION

Law
No. 17 of 1976.

A LAW TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL METRIC CONVERSION AUTHORITY TO FACILITATE THE ADOPTION OF THE METRIC SYSTEM OF MEASUREMENT IN SRI LANKA AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROGRESSIVE USE IN SRI LANKA OF THE METRIC SYSTEM OF MEASUREMENT AS THE SOLE SYSTEM OF MEASUREMENT OF PHYSICAL QUANTITIES.

[1st January. 1977.]

Short title. **1.** This Law may be cited as the National Metric Conversion Law.

(e) a representative of the Ministry charged with the subject of Local Government;

PART 1

THE NATIONAL METRIC CONVERSION AUTHORITY

(f) a representative of the Bureau of Ceylon Standards; and

Establishment of the Authority.

2. For the purposes of this Law an authority by the name of the National Metric Conversion Authority (hereinafter referred to as "the Authority") is hereby established.

(g) a person who is not a public officer and who has an intimate knowledge of commercial and trading activities.

General object of the Authority.

3. The general object for which the Authority is established is hereby declared to be to bring about progressively the use of the Metric System of Measurement in Sri Lanka as the sole system of measurement of physical quantities.

(2) The Minister may in his discretion increase the number of members of the Authority specified in subsection (1). so however that the maximum number of members does not exceed eight.

Constitution of the Authority.

4. (1) The Minister shall appoint the following persons as members of the Authority:—

5. Every member of the Authority other than the Chairman shall, unless he earlier vacates office by death, resignation or removal, hold office for a period of three years. The term of office of the Chairman shall be as determined by the Minister. Term of office of the members of the Authority.

(a) a Chairman who shall be a public officer of the Weights and Measures Division of the Ministry charged with the subject of Trade;

6. (1) The Minister may, if he considers it expedient to do so, remove, by Order published in the Gazette, any member of the Authority without reasons stated. Removal of members from office

(b) a representative of the Ministry charged with the subject of Industries;

(2) A member of the Authority in respect of whom an Order under subsection (1) is made by the Minister shall vacate office on the date of the publication of such Order in the Gazette.

(c) a representative of the Ministry charged with the subject of Planning;

(d) a representative of the Ministry charged with the subject of Finance;

(3) The removal of any member of the Authority under subsection (1) shall not be called in question in any court.

Resignation of members of the Authority.

7. A member of the Authority may at any time resign his office by letter addressed to the Minister.

Eligibility for reappointment as a member of the Authority.

8. Any member who vacates his office, other than a member who is removed from office under section 6, shall be eligible for reappointment.

Casual vacancies among members.

9. (1) If a member of the Authority other than the Chairman dies or resigns or is removed from office the Minister may, having regard to the provisions of section 4, appoint any other person to be a member in place of the member who dies, resigns or is removed from office.

(2) A member appointed under subsection (1) shall, unless he earlier resigns or vacates his office by death or removal, hold office for the unexpired part of the term of office of the member whom he succeeds.

Death, removal or resignation of Chairman.

10. If the Chairman dies or resigns or is removed from office the Minister shall, having regard to the provisions of section 4, appoint another person as Chairman in place of the Chairman who dies, resigns, or is removed from office.

Appointment of person to act for member.

11. If any member of the Authority is temporarily unable to discharge the duties of his office on account of ill health, absence from Sri Lanka or any other cause, the Minister may, having regard to the provisions of section 4, appoint some other person to act as a member in his place.

Validity of acts or proceedings of the Authority.

12. No act or proceeding of the Authority shall be deemed to be invalid by reason only of the existence of any vacancy among its members or any defect in the appointment of any member.

Delegation of powers and duties of the Authority.

13. (1) The Authority may delegate to the Chairman or to any member any of its functions or duties.

(2) Every person to whom any function or duty is delegated under subsection (1) shall exercise or perform such function or duty subject to the general or special directions of the Authority.

14. Subject to the other provisions of this Law the Authority may regulate the procedure in regard to the meetings of the Authority and the transaction of business at such meetings.

PART II

FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE AUTHORITY

15. The functions and duties of the Authority shall be—

- (a) to implement the metrication programme of the State;
- (b) to prepare any modification to the contribution programme that may be considered necessary by the Authority;
- (c) to co-ordinate the activities of Government Departments, public corporations and local authorities in relation to the metrication programme;
- (d) to prepare such conversion tables for the purposes of the metrication programme as may be considered necessary;
- (e) to assess the annual expenditure required by Government Departments, public corporations and local authorities in order to implement the metrication programme of the State ;
- (f) to carry out any necessary programme of education of the general public in relation to the metrication programme and to use all available media of publicity in achieving such object;
- (g) to decide on and to advise the Government on the restriction of the importation of non-metric machinery, implements or other scientific equipment; and
- (h) to do all such other acts as the Authority may consider necessary for the furtherance of its objects and duties under this Law.

Regulation of procedure of the Authority.

Functions and duties of the Authority.

PART III

GENERAL

Authority may request information.

16. (1) The Authority may at any time request in writing any public officer, any director, manager or other officer of a body corporate, any member of an unincorporated body of persons or any officer of a local authority to furnish within a specified period of time any information which the Authority considers necessary relating to or connected with the metrication programme of the State and it shall be the duty of the person who receives such a request to supply the information required within the time specified.

(2) All information furnished under subsection (1) shall be given in writing and shall be accompanied by a declaration that such information is true and accurate to the best of the knowledge and belief of the declarant.

(3) All information obtained by the Authority under subsection (2) shall be treated as confidential by the members of the Authority and by every officer and servant thereof, except where the disclosure or publication of such information is made with the consent in writing of the person from whom such information is obtained :

Provided, however, that nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to prohibit the disclosure or publication of any such information for the purposes of this Law or any legal proceedings thereunder or for the purposes of statistics of facts and figures which makes no reference to any particular individual or business.

(4) Any person who fails to comply with the provisions of subsection (1) or subsection (3) or who furnishes information under subsection (2) knowing such information to be false shall be guilty of an offence under this Law.

The Authority may give directions.

17. (1) The Authority may give general or special directions in writing to any person or to any director, manager, or other officer of a public corporation, or to any director, manager, or other officer of a body corporate, or to any member of an

unincorporated body of persons requiring such person to comply with all or any of the provisions of this Law or of any regulations made thereunder relating to the implementation of the metrication programme.

(2) Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with any directions given by the Authority under subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence under this Law.

18. The Government may make an adequate contribution to the Weights and Measures Division of the Ministry charged with the subject of Trade for the use of the Authority for the furtherance of its objects, functions and duties and for the advancement of the metrication programme of the State.

Contribution by Government for the use of the Authority.

19. The members of the Authority may be remunerated in such manner and at such rates as the Minister may, with the concurrence of the Minister in charge of the subject of Finance, determine.

Remuneration of members of the Authority.

20. (1) The Minister may make regulations for the purpose of carrying out or giving effect to the principles and provisions of this Law.

Regulations.

(2) Every regulation made by the Minister shall be published in the Gazette and shall come into operation on the date of such publication or on such later date as may be specified in the regulation.

(3) Every regulation made by the Minister shall as soon as convenient after its publication in the Gazette be brought before parliament for approval. Any regulation which is not so approved shall be deemed to be rescinded as from the date of disapproval, but without prejudice to anything previously done thereunder.

21. (1) Every person who contravenes or fails to comply with any provision of this Law or any regulation made thereunder shall be guilty of an offence under this Law.

Offences and penalties

(2) Every person who is guilty of an offence under this Law shall on conviction after trial before a Magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand rupees.

(3) Where an offence under this Law is committed by a body of persons then- shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence:

- (a) if that body of persons is a body corporate, every director, manager or every officer of that body corporate ; or
Provided, however, that a director, manager or other officer of such body corporate or a partner of such firm shall not be deemed to be guilty of such offence if he proves that such offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.
- (b) if that body of persons is a firm, every partner of that firm,